

BONO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill, S. 893.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

# SENSE OF HOUSE THAT COMMUNITIES SHOULD IMPLEMENT AMBER PLAN FOR RECOVERY OF ABDUCTED CHILDREN

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 605) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that communities should implement the Amber Plan to expedite the recovery of abducted children.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 605

Whereas communities should implement an emergency alert plan such as the Amber Plan to expedite the recovery of abducted children;

Whereas the Amber Plan, a partnership between law enforcement agencies and media officials, assists law enforcement, parents, and local communities to respond immediately to the most serious child abduction cases;

Whereas the Amber Plan was created in 1996 in memory of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman who was kidnapped and murdered in Arlington, Texas;

Whereas in response to community concern, the Association of Radio Managers with the assistance of area law enforcement in Arlington, Texas, created the Amber Plan;

Whereas, to date, the Amber Plan is credited with saving the lives of at least 9 children nationwide;

Whereas the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children endorses the Amber Plan and is promoting the use of such emergency alert plans nationwide;

Whereas the Amber Plan is responsible for reuniting children with their searching parents: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that Amber Plan is a powerful tool in fighting child abductions and should be used across the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 605.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 605, introduced by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON). This resolution will express the sense of the House of Representatives that communities across the United

States should implement what has become known as the Amber Plan to help find and recover children who have been abducted.

Crimes committed against our children is a serious problem in the United States. Congress has played a significant role in our national struggle to protect children by providing grant money to the States to fight crime committed against children and by passing tough new Federal laws to prosecute criminals who victimize children. But of course most of the work to prevent these crimes and punish those who commit them occurs at the local level.

Today Congress has an opportunity to bring national attention to an effective program working at the local level called the Amber Plan. This program, begun in Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas, helps save the lives of children who have been kidnapped. The Amber Plan was created in 1996 in memory of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman who was tragically kidnapped and murdered in Arlington, Texas. Because of its success in Dallas-Fort Worth, it has been replicated in communities across the country.

The Amber Plan works by utilizing the national Emergency Alert System. When a child is reported abducted, the abduction, including the description of the alleged perpetrator, is immediately broadcast by local radio and television stations using the Emergency Alert System. These alerts get the word to everyone who might recognize the child or might recognize the abductor and then call the police. Since its inception, the Amber Plan has led to the safe recovery of at least nine children nationwide.

The use of the Emergency Alert System to blanket broadcast areas with the news that a child has been abducted is a wonderful idea. Any time a crime such as a kidnapping is committed, quick action can make all the difference in whether the criminal gets away with his crime or is apprehended.

I want to thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) for her leadership on this issue. I urge all my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 605 which would express the sense of the House of Representatives that communities should implement the Amber Plan to expedite the recovery of abducted children.

The Amber Plan provides for community law enforcement, radio and television stations to work together to alert the public of child abductions.

Under the plan, the law enforcement alerts the media which interrupt programs to broadcast notices seeking help from the public when child abductions are reported and confirmed.

The Amber Plan was created in December 1996 in memory of 9-year-old

Amber Hagerman who was kidnapped and murdered in Arlington, Texas. Since its creation, the system has become a powerful tool, especially in the early hours of an abduction investigation, and is credited with saving the lives of at least nine children nationwide.

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The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, a respected organization dedicated to assisting families in recovering missing children, has endorsed the Amber Plan and is directing its expansion. Versions of the plan have been adopted in several cities already, including Kansas City, Missouri; Memphis, Tennessee; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Cincinnati, Ohio.

Mr. Speaker, the Amber Plan deserves our wholehearted support. It provides for a partnership between law enforcement, the media, and the community which can mean the difference between life and death for a child. I commend those who developed the plan and urge my colleagues to vote for this resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 605, which expresses the Sense of the House that communities should implement the Amber Plan to expedite the recovery of abducted children.

The Amber Plan is a partnership between law enforcement agencies and media officials, assists law enforcement, parents, and local communities to respond immediately to the most serious child abduction cases. The Amber Plan was created in 1996 in memory of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman who was kidnapped and murdered in Arlington, Texas. In response to community concern, regarding the abduction of Amber Hagerman, the Association of Radio Managers with the assistance of area law enforcement in Arlington, Texas created the Amber Plan. To date, the Amber Plan is credited with saving the lives of at least 9 children nationwide.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children endorses the Amber Plan and is promoting the use of such emergency alert plans nationwide. For this reason, I believe that the Amber Plan does offer useful tools to those who are in need of resources in the search for tools to fight child abductions and should be used across the United States.

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 605 expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that communities should implement the Amber Plan to expedite the recovery of abducted children.

Mr. Speaker, when a child is abducted, the family's anguish and fear is beyond measure. The Amber Plan was created to quickly enlist the public as partners with law enforcement and the news media to intervene before an abduction ends in serious injury or death for an innocent child.

The plan was created in 1996 in memory of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman who was kidnapped and murdered in Arlington, Texas. To date, the plan is credited with saving the lives of at least 9 children nationwide.

This is how the plan works: When a child is reported abducted, law enforcement notifies local television and radio stations. Both TV

and radio announcements are broadcast describing the child and other details. The public is given phone number to call if they see the child. House Resolution 605 calls upon communities across the U.S. to implement their own Amber Alert programs to assist locally in the recovery of abducted children. House Resolution 605 has been endorsed by the National center for Missing and Exploited Children. They are working to bring this program to cities and towns nationwide and I commended them for their efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank my colleague Mr. LAMPSON from Texas for his assistance with this resolution and commend him as the Chairman of the Missing and Exploited Children's Caucus.

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker. I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 605, a resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that communities should implement the Amber Plan to expedite the recovery of abducted children.

Amber Hagerman, a 9-year-old from Arlington, Texas, was abducted in front of witnesses in 1996. Her body was found 4 days later. After this tragedy, police and local radio station developed the "Amber Plan", named in honor of Amber Hagerman—which was the first use of the Emergency Alert System (EAS), formerly the Emergency Broadcast System, to report a missing child. Under the plan, television and radio stations interrupt programming to broadcast information about a child abduction by using the EAS, a system typically used for weather or other civil emergencies. Since the Amber plan was established in Texas, many areas across the country have adopted a similar emergency alert plan on the local, regional, and even statewide-level. Between 1996 and 2000, these plans have been credited with the safe return of at least nine children.

The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children has endorsed the use of the "AMBER Plan"—America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response—to assist in the recovery of missing children. The plan is simple—to alert the public as quickly as possible of a child abduction in hopes of gaining information leading to the safe recovery of that child and capture of the abductor.

Mr. Speaker, children are snatched off the street everyday in America. Tragically, some are never returned to their caretakers, and many are victims of assault and murder. A 1997 study by the Washington States Attorney indicated that 74 percent of children abducted and murdered by strangers were killed within three hours of being taken.

Realizing that time is of the essence in these cases, this resolution encourages states and communities to recognize that the abduction of a child is of the highest priority for response and investigation. In furtherance of this type of investigation, a carefully planned and quick notification of the public in the area of the abduction by commercial broadcast methods, the "AMBER Plan", can be a valuable tool in the quick recovery of abducted children.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this resolution.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 605, which recognizes the importance of the Amber Plan to families across the country, and encourages other communities to implement the plan. I want to thank Mrs. WILSON and NICK LAMPSON

for their efforts in bringing this resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, the Amber Plan was created in memory of Amber Hagerman, a nine-year-old girl from Arlington, Texas who was tragically abducted and murdered in 1996. Amber was bright and pretty and was riding her bike on January 13 when someone came along and took her away. This case occurred in my congressional district, but I am sure that events like this have happened—sadly—in every corner of our country, in our cities and in the heartlands.

This case caused the police and broadcasters in the North Texas area to look at how they could better protect our community's children. Now once police have received a report of child abduction, they fax information to area media outlets. Broadcast stations then sound an emergency tone during broadcasts—similar to a weather alert—which is followed by the information from police. It gives a description of the children who are missing, the vehicle that they were kidnapped in, and a description of the kidnappers. It also gives a number that people can call to report information. The Amber Plan treats a child abduction like the entire community's emergency, and enlists their help to find the kidnappers.

The success of the Amber Plan in North Texas has led several other communities to implement the plan. Just recently, I spoke with a radio station in Oklahoma, where the state's first use of the Amber Alert led to the successful recovery of two children during a car theft. The State of Florida just recently implemented the system statewide. And the National Center of Missing and Exploited Children is working on implementing the system in a number of other major metropolitan areas.

Last year, I hosted members of the Amber Plan Task Force at a meeting in the Capitol. They addressed Members of Congress about the effectiveness of the Amber Plan in North Texas, and how it can be expanded to their own congressional districts. The group also met with officials from the National Association of Broadcasters and encouraged them to inform their members about expanding the Amber Plan throughout the country.

Along with Mr. LAMPSON, Mr. FRANKS, and several other Members, I am one of the founding members of the Missing and Exploited Children's Caucus. Members of the Caucus know that each year hundred of thousands of American families are confronted with the tragedy of a missing child. This resolution helps remind us that we must constantly work to increase the awareness of these tragic occurrences and to introduce legislation to combat these heinous crimes.

Whoever took Amber didn't know and didn't care that she was an honor student who made all As and Bs. They didn't care that she was a Brownie who had lots of friends and who loved her little brother dearly. They didn't care that her whole life was ahead of her and that their parents wanted to watch her grow into the lovely young woman she promised to be.

Mr. Speaker, we all need to get involved—parents, relatives, politicians, police and other enforcement agencies—to direct attention to the problem of missing children. It is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that someday we will not need the Amber Plan to combat the growing epidemic of missing and exploited children. It is my hope that someday every child in America will feel safe. It is my hope that someday

every child will feel secure while riding his or her bicycle in the neighborhood. It is my hope that someday no parent will ever have to face the tragedy that Amber Hagerman's parents had to face. But until that day comes, we need to support this resolution and work together to protect this country's greatest asset—our children.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join my colleagues in support of this resolution. The Amber program is a great example of law enforcement, the local media and communities coming together to save lives. Today, our children face many obstacles and we need to do what ever we can to ensure their safety. In The Dallas-Fort Worth area Amber program has been successful in the recovery of abducted children.

While we cannot prevent every child abduction, it is important for local communities to respond immediately to child abduction cases and reunite them with their parents as soon as possible. In my district, a young girl was abducted recently. The abductor took the girl on a bicycle to a nearby bus station and then boarded a bus to Florida. This all happened within 20 or 30 minutes. Had the Amber plan been implemented, media outlets would have been interrupted immediately to report a description of the abductor and the location where the abduction took place. This would have saved time and possibly prevented the abductor from getting on that bus to Florida with the child. Fortunately, the young girl was found safely. Unfortunately, it doesn't always end this way.

Since last year, I have been working with law enforcement agencies in the Houston and Harris County area, and our local media, to establish a plan similar to the Amber program. The plan, which is still under development by the Amber Plan Subcommittee, should be operational by January 2001. It will be a cooperative public service effort between 36 law enforcement agencies in the five-county area Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Montgomery, and Waller counties and 40 local radio, television stations, cable systems.

Chuck Wolf, Chairman of the Emergency Alert System and Mark McCoy, station manager of KTRH radio station in Houston have been instrumental in the development of this program. It is important to point out that in order to activate the Houston Regional Amber Plan strict criteria must be met. It has to go through a screening process before it is activated. Once it is activated, we have to make sure that the emergency alert message is sent quickly and is easy to understand—it can only be activated if it passes a screening process.

Law enforcement, local media outlets, and communities will collaborate to make sure that the requirements are met and that the emergency alert is activated properly. However, we also need for the Federal Communications Commission to take part in this effort. Currently, broadcasters are limited by the types of codes they can use to describe the alert event. I urge the FCC to expand event codes that will specifically describe if it is an Amber Alert, hazardous and environmental disaster, or any other man made disaster. We must utilize our available technology effectively to protect our citizens and specially our children from all types of disasters and civil disturbances.

I strongly support this resolution and urge other Members to encourage their communities to implement similar programs.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 605, which was introduced by the Gentlelady from New Mexico, Mrs. WILSON. H. Res. 605 expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that communities should implement the "Amber Plan" to expedite the recovery of abducted children. As we all know, the problem of missing and abducted children is a continuing national concern. Few things are as disturbing to us as crimes committed against kids, and Congress should do all it can to reduce the threat to our children.

H. Res. 605 is a simple resolution that highlights the "Amber Plan," a very effective partnership between law enforcement and the media in Dallas-Fort Worth that has helped save the lives of kids who have been kidnapped. The resolution urges the replication of the Amber Plan in communities across America.

The Amber Plan was created in 1996 in memory of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman, who was tragically kidnapped and murdered in Arlington, Texas. Since then, many communities across the United States have put similar plans into effect. It is credited with the safe return of at least nine abducted children nationwide. Here's how it works. When a child is reported abducted, the abduction—including a description of the alleged perpetrator—is immediately flashed across local radio and television stations using the Emergency Alert System, what used to be known as the Emergency Broadcast System. This quick action alerts the community to the abduction, and it has apparently spooked child abductors into releasing their victims when they hear descriptions of themselves broadcast on the radio or TV.

Quick action is often necessary to thwart the commission of crime, and the Amber Plan is a great idea that ought to be put in place in every city and town across America. I want to thank the Gentlelady for her leadership on this issue, and I urge all my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for House Resolution 605 introduced by Representative WILSON. I would also like to applaud the efforts of the Missing and Exploited Children Caucus for raising the awareness of such issues. H. Res. 605 expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that communities should implement the Amber Alert Plan to expedite the recovery of abducted children. The Amber Alert Plan was created in 1996 in memory of 9-year-old Amber Hagerman who was kidnapped and murdered in Arlington, Texas. The Alert has been credited with saving the lives of at least 9 children nationwide.

Last year in Northwest Indiana, more than 1,600 children were reported missing. When a child is abducted, time is the most important factor in determining whether that child will return home alive. Due to the Amber Plan's proven track record of success, I initiated the Alert in my district on April 4, 2000. The Amber Alert is a joint effort between media outlets and police departments that enlists the help of the public to put more eyes on the look out for a missing child. In the event of an abduction, radio, and television stations provide quick, police-generated reports on the child. The notification plan commonly begins with a high-pitched tone and is followed by detailed information about the missing child or kidnapping suspect. A phone number is then given

for the public to call if they see either the child or the suspect. Police are careful not to overuse the Amber Plan, carefully evaluating the circumstances of a missing child report before sounding the alert. I truly believe that the Amber Alert will be a valuable resource in my district in the effort to assist localities in the timely return of any missing child.

I support the efforts of communities across the U.S. in implementing their own Amber Alert programs to assist in the recovery of abducted children. This resolution has been endorsed by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, which continues to work tirelessly to implement this program nationwide. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution in an effort to combat child abduction and protect our children.

Mr. SCOTT. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HANSEN). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 605.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### AMERICA'S LAW ENFORCEMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH PROJECT

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1865) to provide grants to establish demonstration mental health courts.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1865

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "America's Law Enforcement and Mental Health Project".

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) fully 16 percent of all inmates in State prisons and local jails suffer from mental illness, according to a July, 1999 report, conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics;

(2) between 600,000 and 700,000 mentally ill persons are annually booked in jail alone, according to the American Jail Association;

(3) estimates say 25 to 40 percent of America's mentally ill will come into contact with the criminal justice system, according to National Alliance for the Mentally Ill;

(4) 75 percent of mentally ill inmates have been sentenced to time in prison or jail or probation at least once prior to their current sentence, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics in July, 1999; and

(5) Broward County, Florida and King County, Washington, have created separate Mental Health Courts to place nonviolent mentally ill offenders into judicially monitored in-patient and out-patient mental health treatment programs, where appropriate, with positive results.

#### SEC. 3. MENTAL HEALTH COURTS.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Title I of the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 is

amended by inserting after part U (42 U.S.C. 3796hh et seq.) the following:

#### "PART V—MENTAL HEALTH COURTS

##### "SEC. 2201. GRANT AUTHORITY.

"The Attorney General shall make grants to States, State courts, local courts, units of local government, and Indian tribal governments, acting directly or through agreements with other public or nonprofit entities, for not more than 100 programs that involve—

"(1) continuing judicial supervision, including periodic review, over preliminarily qualified offenders with mental illness, mental retardation, or co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders, who are charged with misdemeanors or nonviolent offenses; and

"(2) the coordinated delivery of services, which includes—

"(A) specialized training of law enforcement and judicial personnel to identify and address the unique needs of a mentally ill or mentally retarded offender;

"(B) voluntary outpatient or inpatient mental health treatment, in the least restrictive manner appropriate, as determined by the court, that carries with it the possibility of dismissal of charges or reduced sentencing upon successful completion of treatment; and

"(C) centralized case management involving the consolidation of all of a mentally ill or mentally retarded defendant's cases, including violations of probation, and the coordination of all mental health treatment plans and social services, including life skills training, such as housing placement, vocational training, education, job placement, health care, and relapse prevention for each participant who requires such services; and

"(D) continuing supervision of treatment plan compliance for a term not to exceed the maximum allowable sentence or probation for the charged or relevant offense and, to the extent practicable, continuity of psychiatric care at the end of the supervised period.

##### "SEC. 2202. DEFINITIONS.

"In this part—

"(1) the term 'mental illness' means a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder—

"(A) of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria within the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders published by the American Psychiatric Association; and

"(B) that has resulted in functional impairment that substantially interferes with or limits 1 or more major life activities; and

"(2) the term 'preliminarily qualified offender with mental illness, mental retardation, or co-occurring mental and substance abuse disorders' means a person who—

"(A)(i) previously or currently has been diagnosed by a qualified mental health professional as having a mental illness, mental retardation, or co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders; or

"(ii) manifests obvious signs of mental illness, mental retardation, or co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders during arrest or confinement or before any court; and

"(B) is deemed eligible by designated judges.

##### "SEC. 2203. ADMINISTRATION.

"(a) CONSULTATION.—The Attorney General shall consult with the Secretary of Health and Human Services and any other appropriate officials in carrying out this part.

"(b) USE OF COMPONENTS.—The Attorney General may utilize any component or components of the Department of Justice in carrying out this part.

"(c) REGULATORY AUTHORITY.—The Attorney General shall issue regulations and